

# THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 16.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 10, 1827.

VOL. 2.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

AUTHENTICITY OF THE PENTATEUCH.

*Continued from page 230.*

But, whatever might be the authority or the contents of the book produced by Hilkiah, it exists no more: *it was burnt*. Hilkiah produced this book about a dozen years before the Jews were carried into captivity to Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar. After many years of Jewish captivity, Artaxerxes and Cyrus sent Ezra, or Esdras, to settle again in Jerusalem, with the remnant that could be collected of the Jewish captives. An account of this return is given in the book of Ezra, among the canonical books of the Bible; and a fuller and more particular account of the same transaction, in the two books of Esdras in the Apocrypha. There are some differences in names and minor particulars, but they are substantially the same.

Esdras gives the following information: "Book 2d, ch. 14, v. 19. Then answered I, and said, Behold, Lord, I will go as thou hast commanded me, and reprove the people which are present; but they which shall be born afterward, who shall admonish *them*? Thus the world is set in darkness, and they that dwell therein are without light. **For thy Law is burnt:** therefore no man knoweth the things that are done of thee, or the works that shall begin. But if I have found grace before thee, send thy Holy Ghost into me, and I shall write all that hath been done in the world, since the beginning, which were written in thy Law; that men may find thy path, and that they which will live in the latter days may live. And he answered me saying, Go thy way, gather the people together, and say unto them, that they seek thee not for forty days. But look, thou prepare thee many box trees; and take with thee Sarea, Dabria, Jelemia, Ecams, and Aziel, these five which are ready to write swiftly. V. 42. So these five men sat forty days, and at night they ate bread. As for me, I spake in the day, and held not my tongue at night."

In forty days they wrote 204 books: of these, Esdras was directed to publish openly all but the seventy last books, which he was to deliver only to such as be wise among the people; and he did so. This is the last passage that relates to the subject. So that the history of the Law of Moses, as contained in the Bible, informs us,

1st. That Moses wrote no long composition: none that would occupy more than a day to read or write.

2d. That what he did write was either cut upon two tables of stone, or traced in plaster while it was soft; for he would naturally prefer that

mode of writing which he chose to recommend to others as the most convenient.

3d. That we have no account of these books of Moses in any part of the Bible, from the time of their original composition, till the priest Hilkiah said that he had found them. What Hilkiah found, or what he composed; whether it was in any respect the same as the ancient Pentateuch, no one can tell; for it does not appear that it was ever published, and no trace of it remains.

4th. A few years after Hilkiah had produced his edition of the Law of Moses, the Jews were carried into captivity, where they had no means of becoming acquainted with the Law, or of observing it. Indeed, either during the invasion of the Babylonians, or during this captivity, the Book of the Law *was burnt*, and no copy of it remained; and Ezra, or Esdras, was obliged to dictate, from memory, the whole history of the world from the beginning, as well as the history and law of the Jewish nation. Except this book, so dictated by Esdras, we know of no other that relates to this question. He therefore was the probable author of the present Pentateuch, so far as history throws any light on the subject. I say the *probable* author, because there is nothing like certainty attached to any part of the historical testimony relating to the books called the Pentateuch. All that is certain about them, is, that they are not original; but when or by whom written depends on no certain evidence. The following considerations also induce me to regard Esdras as the author of them:

Because, no book of the Law existed when he undertook to compose one from recollection: the book that did exist *was burnt*.

Because, as Esdras suggested, the Pentateuch begins with a history of the world from the creation.

Because, the book of the Law compiled by Ezra, or Esdras, took him seven days to read to the people, 8 Nehem. 18, which agrees with the size of the present Pentateuch.

Because, the account of the creation is manifestly a Chaldee tradition, tacked to the Jewish history, without any connection with it. Chaldee, from speaking of God in the plural, Elohim, Gods. Chaldee, because it agrees with the Phenician and Chaldee writers as cited by Josephus, Alexander Polyhistor, and Eusebius. Chaldee, because Ezra, or Esdras, who was educated if not born in Babylon during the captivity, would derive all his knowledge from the Chaldee writers of repute in his day. Chaldee, because it is manifestly no part of the Jewish history or tradition. Moses would never have used the expression Elohim, the gods. Chaldee, also, because the Jews during their captivity, those among them who attended to literature at all, would be conversant in the Chaldee literature; and the Chaldee traditional cosmogony would be fashionable in the time of Esdras.

To these objections, doubtless, many replies will be made. It will be said, that they are all old, and have been often and long ago refuted.

To this I answer, it is not true. They have never been refuted, and cannot be refuted by fair argument. The hardihood of assertion applied to them would astonish any unprejudiced reader, not acquainted with the clerical mode of treating these subjects.

It will be said, the contradictory passages are interpolations. To this I answer, they are incorporated with the rest of the books: they are founded on the same evidence: they appear as parts of one whole: there is no mark but the forgetfulness that dictated them, by which they are to be distinguished from the rest of the works wherein they are found. Such an objection would prevent all examination of the authenticity of testimony or evidence, from the contradictions or inconsistencies it may contain. Those who tell us these are interpolations, should inform us when they took place; how, by whom, and for what purpose. The passages objected to are no more than reasonable explanations of the text, if written, as I presume they were, by some author long after the date of the original transactions.

It will be said, that the book of Esdras is an apocryphal book. To this I answer, there is no known criterion of the books called apocryphal. Every ancient ecclesiastical author, and every great division of Christians, have different notions of books canonical and books apocryphal. There was no proposal of a Christian canon till Melito, bishop of Sardis, in the year 170; nor any canon settled on ecclesiastical authority till the council of Sardis, in 465 of the Christian era.

Further, the book of Esdras is considered as canonical by the Greek church, who are just as competent judges as any other church. It is of more authority than the book of Ezra: the book of Ezra is canonical: the book of Nehemiah is canonical: both of these books give an account of the same transactions that Esdras does. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah are quite contradictory, each being the hero of his own story, and the prime agent in the transactions narrated, and hardly making mention of the other. So that, though both be canonical, it is impossible that both should be true. They can easily be compared in an hour's time. Esdras gives an account of the same transactions, with fewer contradictions: he is therefore more worthy of credit than either. The common opinion is, that Esdras and Ezra are the same person.

As to Nehemiah, the Tershitha, as he calls himself, he could not have been the author of the book ascribed to him as it now appears; for in 12 Nehem. 22 he mentions Jaddua the priest, and Darius the Persian, (Darius Codo mannus,) who did not flourish in the world for 100 years afterward.

It will be said, that there is as good evidence of the authenticity of the Pentateuch, as of the works of Herodotus, Livy, Plutarch, and many other ancient historians, whose writings are now generally believed to contain faithful accounts of the facts which they detail. To this I answer, that in so far as these historians narrate occurrences within the bounds of probability, nothing can be said against admitting their testimony. But whenever they exceed this; whenever they speak of events taking place which are known to be contrary to the laws of Nature, and, therefore, false, we reject these parts of their histories. In like manner, we refuse to credit the wonderful and miraculous stories told in the Jewish books, while we readily assent to any thing they contain which we know, from experience and observation, to be founded in truth.

Herodotus informs us that, on one occasion, an *ox* spoke when they were leading it to be sacrificed; and, on another, that a *crow* prognosticated or foretold the misfortunes which attended the reign of the Roman

emperor, Domitian. The same historian gravely assures us, that the marble statues of the gods, which had been set up in the temples, at one time sweat great drops of blood. We at once smile on reading these absurdities; but what is there more absurd in the narrative than in that of the Bible, where we are as gravely told that a serpent and an ass spoke; that all the water in the land of Egypt was turned into blood; that the Lord rained bread from heaven for 40 years, and that, during the whole of that period, the shoes and garments of the Israelites neither needed to be repaired nor renewed. The individual who is so credulous as to believe all this on the authority of the Jewish books, has no better evidence of its truth than he has of the truth of what the Roman historian has written. If the one ought to be rejected as fabulous, so ought the other.

There is also this difference between the works of Herodotus, Livy, and Plutarch, and the books attributed to Moses: that the latter is said to have been specially commissioned, and instructed by God himself to write these books, while the former have no such pretensions. It therefore requires evidence to support the authenticity of the Pentateuch of a nature far more conclusive and satisfactory than that required to give currency to the works of mere historians. Before we can believe that Deity inspired any writer to communicate his will to man, we must be satisfied, from internal as well as external evidence, that the writing offered us, claiming so high a character, is every way worthy of an infinitely wise and perfect being. Does our examination of the five Jewish books convince us that we ought to view them in that favorable light? Or rather, have we not seen that they are totally destitute of that sort of evidence which would entitle them to be received in any court of judicature in the world. Independent of the numerous facts, by which it is demonstrated that Moses could not be their author, do not the books themselves afford sufficient evidence that they are unworthy of the countenance of any intelligent being? Is not the book of Genesis a collection of absurd and frivolous tales? And where is the history to be found to corroborate the statements of the book of Exodus, or of any other of the books composing the Pentateuch? Can any one, possessing common sense, believe that the Almighty would dictate such ridiculous things concerning himself as are narrated in these books? Sometimes he is represented as a laborer, toiling and exhausting himself to such a degree that he requires *rest* to recruit himself; sometimes as a tailor, regulating the dresses of the creatures he had formed; sometimes as a fringe or tassel maker, decorating a petty box of wood called their ark, or tabernacle; sometimes as their warrior and generalissimo, when, without provocation, they invaded and plundered their neighbors. When they prayed, he came and talked to them; when they sacrificed, he came and eat with them; and, as is even at this day ignorantly imagined, God had nothing to do but to be constantly at the elbows, and to attend to the wants and wishes, of the most savage, barbarous, and ignorant nation of which we have any account in history.

Mr. Jones, in his account of the canon of the scriptures, lays down the following criteria, as tests by which we may determine what are apocryphal, or spurious, and what are not, viz.:

The book is apocryphal which contains *any contradictions*.

Or, any *histories* contrary to those known to be true.

Or, any *doctrines* contrary to those known to be true.

Or, *relations* ludicrous, trifling, fabulous, or silly.

Or, which mentions *facts* which occurred *later* than the time of the author to whom it is ascribed.

Or, whose *style* is manifestly different from the known style of its supposed author.

Or, which is written in an *idiom* or *dialect* different from that of the author to whom it is ascribed, or different from the idiom of his country.

Or, that manifests a *disposition* different from the known disposition of the supposed author.

To all this I accede; but I fear, if all these tests of authenticity should be adopted and insisted on, we should have dreadful havoc made in the canonical authority of many books that now pass through the world with a very orthodox character.

EUSEBIUS.

THE CATECHUMEN.

*Continued from page 227.*

At length he was arrested by the magistrates, and crucified between two robbers. And he died? Yes. And was buried? Yes. Well then I suppose that is the end of his history? Hold, sir, you go too fast; he died, it is true, but it was in consideration that God would pardon mankind. Oh, I understand you. God would pardon the sins of mankind because they had killed his son. Truly, nothing could be better imagined. But know for testimony of his divinity, he rose again the third day. And what proof have you of this? The writings of the disciples. But what said the people? They contradicted it.

Oh, gentlemen! I find you are as well provided with proofs as with reasonings; but did he perform any other miracles? Yes; he cured those possessed of evil spirits; dried a fig tree; sent devils into a herd of swine; filled the nets of his disciples with fishes, and changed water into wine; but he loved so to humble himself, that never in his life did he own that he was God. And why do you believe it? His sectaries have disputed a long time on this important article, as well as of the Holy Ghost, because three persons were not spoken of in the Old Testament. The Holy Ghost was found out to be God after twelve hundred years had passed over, and as for the divinity of Jesus, three hundred years of disputes, troubles, and massacres sufficed to decide the matter in his favor.

As you love this God so much, I suppose he was born in your country? No; he was born in another quarter of the globe. Indeed! You go very far to seek your gods! He must then have left a book of doctrines of religion, which you thought proper to adopt? No! he did not teach a new religion, neither did he write any thing; but some of his disciples have written his history and discourses. And your religion is there exactly prescribed? Oh, no! We have only a few particulars of his life, accompanied by some moral precepts; he has there declared that he came to fulfil the ancient law, and not to change it. Then there was a particular

religion in the country where he was born, before his time? Yes. And it is that same religion that you still observe? No; ours is in direct opposition to it. But whence then is this new religion, for you own that it was never announced by your God? We have explained, commented, interpreted without ceasing these seventeen hundred years on the discourses of Christ; and have drawn from them a long succession of dogmas and mysteries quite new. And do you all agree in these interpretations? No; far from it. We have always been disputing, fighting, and killing one another on account of them. Well, I am very sorry to tell you that I do not think your religion very attracting. What do you say? You do not agree in the explanations, and you quarrel and kill each other about them? Your religion does not at all please me; yet I suppose it had been adopted by the people of the country where your God dwelt? You are again deceived; Christ had but a very small number of disciples, and these were from the lowest class of the people. Have we not already told you that he was put to death by order of the magistrates? What do you say, gentlemen? Was not his doctrine believed by the people he attempted to instruct? No. His miracles, have they not persuaded those who were witnesses? No. And why should you believe them; you who came seventeen hundred years after him? O, sir, all things require an explanation. Know then that God sent his son among this people whose hearts he had hardened, purposely that they might not believe in him.

Well explained! I am quite delighted with your mode of reasoning; but pray what name do you give this people? Jews. Jews! Jews! I never heard of them. No, I believe you. They occupied such a small territory, that their reputation did not extend far; nevertheless, they were formerly God's favorite people. God chose them from among all the nations of the earth; he governed them himself, and often conversed with their chiefs. Sometimes through tenderness for his people he ordered them to massacre each other; and at one time twenty-three thousand were put to death by their own citizens at the express command of God.

God ordered one of the kings to murder every man of a nation they had vanquished; the king had the audacity to spare some who were not in a state to defend themselves and was punished for it. A son of this king was condemned to die for eating honey on the day of battle, and God, who was justly irritated at the father as well as son, proscribed them both, and made choice of a new king.

This king (whom God had expressly chosen) committed adultery with the wife of one of his generals, and massacred her husband. By the adulteress he had a son who kept seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines in his seraglio; but you must know these two kings were cherished by our God; both had heavenly benedictions heaped on their heads. The father was the man after God's own heart, and the son was the wisest of men. The Son of God, who became a man, descended in direct line from this *wisest of men*, and from the adulteress of whom we have just spoken.

O, gentlemen, exclaimed I, you make me shudder at your impious ideas. They resumed. Have we not told you that the conduct of this God was always mysterious, purposely to humble our weak reason? The first legislator whom God gave to his favorite people was an assassin;

but he had nevertheless the gift of performing a number of miracles. He composed a body of civil and religious rites and laws which we still revere as having been inspired by the Deity. And yet, you do not observe them? No; truly. We hold those people in horror who do so. It is true, that this was formerly the favorite people of God, and all other nations were chosen, and this favorite people rejected. Do you not admire, sir, the wisdom of the God we adore?

At this discourse, I stole away from them, and could scarcely persuade myself it was more than a dream. Having before seen to what great perfection this people had attained in every human science, I began to fear the weakness of my nature, and determined to return to my country; lest those abominable European prejudices should make me forget my duty to my fellow creatures, and reverence for the God of all worlds.

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**NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1827.**

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LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE EIGHTH.

*Continued from page 220.*

Such is the history of the angels among the ancient Brahmins, which they still continue to teach after the lapse of 50 centuries, and which no one who is divested of prejudice can peruse without being convinced that it was from this source the Jews and the Christians derived their ideas of evil angels, driven out of heaven, and of their prince having tempted Eve in the form of a serpent. "The angels," says Voltaire, "who, according to the Babylonians and the Jews, presided over nations, were precisely what the gods of Homer were—celestial beings subordinate to a supreme being. The imagination which produced the one, probably produced the other. The number of the inferior gods increased with the religion of Homer. Among the Christians, the number of the angels was augmented in the course of time." Scot has estimated them at a thousand millions. "The ancient mythology (continues Voltaire) of the good and bad genii having passed from the east to Greece and Rome, we consecrated this opinion, by admitting for each individual a good and an evil angel, of whom one assists him and the other torments him from his birth to his death." Mahomet, in like manner, makes two angels take an account of every man's thoughts. Sale remarks on this part of the Koran, "that the Mahometans have a tradition that the angel who notes a man's good actions has a command over him who notes his evil actions; and that when a man does a good action, the angel of the right hand writes it down ten times, and when he commits an ill action, the same angel says to the angel of the left hand, 'Forbear setting it down for seven hours: peradventure he may pray, or may ask pardon.' St. Jerome fancied that, at our births, God gave to each of us an angel to watch over our souls; and some of the earlier fathers carried the idea still farther, in appropriating to nations, cities, manhood, and infancy, each their separate and independent guardian spirit."

Having made God a material being, endowed with all the feelings and infirmities of our nature, they could not do otherwise than confer the same qualities on his angels. The Jewish writers speak of them as corporeal—having wings at their backs, which they sometimes concealed with their clothing—and fond of eating and drinking like ordinary men. The two cherubs which were in the temple had each two heads, the one that of an ox, and the other that of an eagle with six wings. The Christians paint the cherubs in the form of a flying head, with two small wings below the ear; the angels and archangels as young men, with two wings at their back. Is it not surprising, that while the air is filled with so many *substantial* beings, though invisible to our sight, we are never sensible of coming in contact with any of them? Or is it that they are so nimble, and so desirous of avoiding our gross bodies, as to be always certain, whichever way they turn, of eluding our touch? But why is it that one of these celestial beings, alleged to be so essential to the welfare of man, and who accompany him every moment of his existence, does not in these times condescend, as he did of old, to show himself in *propria persona*? Is it that the age in which we live is destitute of that hospitality which characterized the age of the patriarchs? and that, knowing this, the angels are afraid that, instead of good cheer, they might find it difficult to obtain the necessities of life?

Leaving these questions to be solved, if they can be solved, by those who have received grace from above, we shall proceed in our elucidation of the remaining part of the books of the Old Testament.

The 4th chapter of Genesis commences with telling us that "Adam knew his wife Eve; and she conceived and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord." How nearly does this language of mother Eve resemble the cant of the present day! Every thing comes from the Lord. If it be a prize in the lottery, this, although the fruit of immorality, according to the code of fanaticism, is immediately converted into a gift from heaven, if it happen to fall to the lot of one of the faithful. If, on the contrary, sickness and ruin overwhelm him and his family, this also is distinctly traced to the hand of the Lord. "Is there evil in the city, saith the Lord, and I have not done it." It might be supposed, that as every thing which happens to men, the good and the evil, comes from God; that, as he is constantly employed in listening to and in answering the millions of prayers offered up to him from all parts of the globe, nothing would be left for the devil or his host of angels to perform. Yet we are assured, with that inconsistency which is so conspicuous in all parts of the Christian system, that Satan and his imps are actively engaged, night and day, in leading men astray from the right path; that, although God is the sole governor of the universe—"rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm"—has the hearts of all men in his hand, and turneth them whichever way he pleaseth—the devil is nevertheless the prince of the power of the air, working in the children of disobedience, and continually thwarting the well arranged plans of omnipotence.

Eve seems to have entertained the idea, that God, who had, for so trifling a fault as that of eating an apple, cursed herself, her husband, the beasts of the field, every tree and herb, and the very ground itself, could

be no other than the source of evil; for we find her acknowledging the Lord in the birth of Cain the murderer; whereas, when Abel the virtuous was born, not a word of thankfulness escaped her lips. (Ver. 2d,) "And she again bare his brother Abel, and Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground."

Ver. 3d. "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. (Ver. 4,) And Abel he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering. (Ver. 5,) But unto Cain and to his offering he had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. (Ver. 6th,) And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? (Ver. 7,) If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

Here, the priests tell us, is the foundation or establishment of religious worship. And well may they claim such authority; for in no part of the Bible can there be found a more direct sanction to extortion than what this passage contains. The Lord, it seems, had no respect to the offering of Cain, because it consisted of the simple products of the earth; while the offering of Abel was graciously accepted, because it was the firstlings (that is, the young and delicate) of his flock, and of the fat thereof. Jehovah, it appears, had a more refined taste than to be put off with mere vegetables; his appetite could not be satiated unless a tender lamb or kid, served up with rich gravy, was set before him. How well did the Jewish priests improve on this example. In process of time, the blood of bulls and of goats was not sufficient to glut their voracious deity—the kidneys and the fat were added to the feast; and, to give a zest to the banquet, wine and oil were poured out in abundance, and the rarest and choicest trees pillaged of their sweets to constitute a dessert. Nor was this all: the Jehovah of the Jews—this prince of gluttons, after having revelled to his heart's content on lamb, mutton, veal, and beef—after having gorged himself with the blood which flowed from the veins of these victims, and devoured as much fat as would have surfeited an entire nation, and washed the whole down, like a bacchanalian, with goblets of the juice of the grape—after having done all this, nothing would satisfy him short of a sacrifice in the temple of Venus; for what other purpose was it that the thousands of *virgins*, said in the Bible to have been set apart for the *Lord*, than to administer to his libidinous desires.

Horrible and disgusting as this picture may seem, it has received no coloring from me. The Bible, indeed, would have justified one more vivid. But it was necessary to exhibit deity as is there done, to afford an excuse for the profligacy, the extortions, and the enormities of the priesthood. These favorites of heaven required a god of monstrous passions; one who delights to wallow in vice, to shelter them from public odium. Not content with a tithe of the products of the earth, they must have rich benefices, splendid palaces, costly furniture, tables groaning with the most expensive luxuries; and, under the pretence of devoting themselves and the other sex to the service of their god, they have formed institutions, in which they can gratify without restraint or observation the most licen-

tious passions to which the errors of education have given birth. It is of no avail to plead inability to satisfy the rapacity of these men. Having constantly before their eyes the rejection of Cain's simple offering, and the preference given to the rich one of his brother, they are never satisfied but when they are filling their coffers with the spoils of nations. No plea of right, of law, of justice, or even of humanity, has any influence with these men, when the question under consideration relates to the patrimony of the church.

When it is considered that the offering of Cain was the best he could present—the only one, indeed, which his means could justify—we cannot be surprised that he felt hurt at its rejection, or that he was jealous of his brother, whose offering, (which was exactly what was to be expected of a man in his circumstances,) was considered worthy of acceptance. His countenance is said to have fallen on perceiving this preference, which having attracted the notice of the Lord, he considered this a fit opportunity of giving him a lecture, from which it may fairly be inferred that it is not the *motive*, however pure, which constitutes *merit* in the eyes of heaven, but the intrinsic value of the thing offered. It is not said, or even insinuated, that the act of religious worship performed by Cain was less *sincere* than that of his brother. Yet he is told “if thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted. And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.” Now what was this but telling Cain, that he had not done well in confining his offering to the fruits of the earth, and that he should, in order to obtain favor from on high, have presented, like his brother, a *he-tacomb* of cattle? Is not this, in fact, the principle recognised and acted upon by the clergy of the present day? Sincerity is of no account with them: it is the number of ceremonies, of prayers, the frequency of attendance at their preachings, the multiplicity of the gifts and offerings of their followers, that constitutes true virtue. Every thing else; the duties of a father and of a citizen—the most humane and upright conduct—in short, all that is really valuable and praiseworthy among men—is held in utter contempt—pronounced “filthy rags” and meriting the reprobation of heaven, if not accompanied by an unremitting compliance with the rules prescribed by the priesthood, and a large display of donations in support of institutions established for the sole purpose of perpetuating their grandeur and influence.

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ADDRESS FROM MR. OWEN.

To the Agriculturists, Mechanics, and Manufacturers, both Masters and Operatives, of Great Britain and Ireland.

*Continued from page 238.*

Having attempted to explain the cause why you are so frequently poverty stricken in the midst of overflowing abundance, and while you possess the means of increasing that abundance without limit, I will endeavor to point out the means by which you may not only arrest the evil, but turn the cause which now generates it into a new channel, by which, if I am not mistaken, this evil shall be made to produce only unmixed good to yourselves and fellow creatures.

I have already stated that every invention, discovery, and improvement, in physical science, facilitates production; and that, under the present organization of society, whatever facilitates production diminishes the value of your labor in a relative proportion to the amount of production, as long as the arrangements of society render it necessary for you to dispose of it as a merchantable article, upon the principle of buying cheap and selling dear, and bartering it in this manner to the highest bidder. By this procedure you aid in bringing your labor in direct competition with mechanism and other scientific improvements, by which, as experience proves, you must continually sink in the contest, until you will ultimately descend to the lowest possible stage of existence; and until a few very wealthy families will retain you, under the fallacious notion of being free, in a more hopeless and helpless state of slavery than are the negroes in the West Indies and America, who have, what you would want, a direct claim for food, clothes, and habitation, on the master by whom they are reared or purchased.

Instead of selling yourselves to the public for money, by which your labor receives the most useless and injurious direction, would it not be more rational to apply your physical and mental powers directly for your own use, in a fair exchange among yourselves, of value for value, or the amount of labor in one article against the same amount in another?

By this simple and just mode of transacting business, labor, and not money, would become the standard of value; and, without much difficulty, the value in all articles might be represented by notes of labor for an hour, a day, a month, a year, &c. Arrangements might be devised to prevent any change in the value of these notes, which might be made to represent real wealth remaining in store; for when the articles which the notes represented were taken for consumption, or deteriorated by keeping, notes to the amount of the labor or deterioration in those articles might be destroyed.

Some difficulty might arise at first, in discovering the amount of labor which *ought* to be in every article; but this process is nothing more than ascertaining the real prime cost of articles, which truly consists in the labor required to produce them. But, as one person will take more time than another to perfect the same kind of article, the time required by a workman possessing an average degree of skill and industry should be the principle by which the calculation should be made.

This mode of conducting business will introduce principles of justice and equity in all transactions between man and man: it will gradually destroy every motive to trick, deceit, and chicanery; and, by its adoption, poverty, or the fear of poverty, will be for ever removed from the producers of real wealth.

The necessity which the present system inflicts on all, to endeavor to sell their own labor dear, and to buy the labor of others cheap, contaminates and debases the character throughout all the departments of life. In fact, no one who has studied human nature will ever expect to find a pure mind, or real virtue, in society, as long as the business of life is one continued attempt to buy cheap and sell dear, by the intervention of money, which itself is daily altering in value.

Any difficulties, however, which may arise from exchanging labor for labor among the producers, through the intervention of labor notes, will be but of short duration; for the knowledge which will accompany this change, and which in some degree will grow out of this practice, will speedily lead to a very improved state of society—to one in which, through a more enlightened system of education, the rising generation will be taught the practice of a much better mode of production, distribution, and consumption, by the means of which they will be enabled to form their children into a very superior order of beings, by training them from infancy to know themselves, and to organize a society in conformity to that knowledge, which will permit and direct them to enjoy, at the point of temperance, all their physical and mental faculties, in evident accordance with the laws of their nature.

For your benefit I now request to ask our legislators and political economists, how it has occurred that you should have received, in about half a century, an aid to your natural powers of production equal to the assistance of 600 millions of well trained laborers, who tire not, who never refuse to work, who require neither food nor clothes, and yet that you should experience a dire necessity to extend the time of your daily labor just in proportion as these millions came to your assistance, from nine hours per day, of comparatively light and healthy occupation, to 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and, as I am told, in the manufacturing districts to 15, and sometimes even to 16 hours per day, of severe and often unhealthy employment, and that you do not now receive the same advantages in return for the 14 or 16 hours of hard labor per day that you readily obtained for your nine hours of comparatively easy labor, before the introduction of these enormous artificial powers?

I now require them to account for the additional productions of these 600 millions of laborers, who are now in full work, without requiring food, or clothing, or education, and to account for your present pecuniary condition, as well as for your very natural fears for the future. I also request them to inform you, why measures have not been recommended, and adopted in practice, to produce the very reverse of these lamentable results? Why, in proportion as these new powers were brought to your aid, your labor did not gradually diminish, from nine hours per day, to eight, to seven, to six, to five, to four, and to three; and why the three hours of labor per day should not now be of more value to you, as they might easily be made more productive than the nine were before the introduction of these enormous mechanical and chemical powers of production?

I request them to inform you how it is, that, under this mighty power, if rightly directed, to produce wealth, promote knowledge, and secure independence, ample beyond the wishes of rational beings, for every one of a population tenfold or twentyfold more numerous than the present numbers in the British Islands, you, the actual producers of all wealth, should be stricken with poverty and with the most fearful forebodings for the future; why the poor rates have increased so enormously, and why crime has extended in every direction? It will be no answer to these questions to say, that "your numbers have increased," for you bring with you at birth the powers to produce, with ease, far more than you con-

sume; and, therefore, under a right direction of these powers, an increase of your numbers ought to increase still more your surplus productions, and consequently require less daily labor from each of you.

And, except where laws and institutions, founded in ignorance, compel the industry and mental faculties of man to take a vicious and unnatural direction, the surplus productions *have increased* every where with the increase of population; and they will continue to increase, as numbers multiply, until every acre of the earth shall be fully cultivated, although there should not be another improvement or discovery made in the sciences of chemistry or mechanism beyond those already known and secured to the public.

Another and a better reply, in answer to the foregoing questions, than "an increase of your numbers," must, therefore, be given, to account for the strange anomaly which Great Britain and Ireland present, of an empire superabounding, through the industry and inventive powers of its inhabitants, in all the necessaries, comforts, and luxuries requisite for human happiness, while the mass of its most industrious population is in hourly fear and trembling for the support of a precarious existence, being overwhelmed with poverty, with poor rates, and with crime.

London, September 7, 1827.

ROBERT OWEN.

P. S. Other principles than those by which this empire has been governed, occurred at an early period of life to me to be true; and, without any motives of faction or of personal consideration, I have never ceased to endeavor to ascertain, whether those early imbibed principles were derived from facts, and therefore founded in truth, or whether my mind had been deluded by error. In the progress of this search after truth I proved the real value of these principles, for I tried them in early life in directing extensive practical measures among a large population in Manchester, and afterward at New Lanark; and I never found them to lead me astray from Nature, or to be unsuccessful in the result, except when they were opposed by the ignorance and prejudice which our ancestors naturally and necessarily transmitted to all of us. These proceedings in Manchester and New Lanark were not hidden from the public, and are well known: in the latter place, I advanced with these experiments to the extent that the ignorance or want of experience of the present times would admit. The principles which appeared to me to be true would not allow of a further advance in practice, without the probability of exciting a greater degree of irritation, anger, and ill will, than I wished to create in a search after truth for the benefit of my fellow creatures. And about this period circumstances very unexpectedly occurred to make it probable that these principles could be more easily tried, to their full extent, in the new settlements of America, than in an old established empire, in which the leading notions by which the policy of the country was governed had been unchanged for many centuries. As the chief object of my life became at this time a desire to ascertain not only the truth of the principles which had been impressed on my mind, but their applicability to practice also, I crossed the Atlantic, and purchased New Harmony, in the state of Indiana, a property well suited in many

respects for the experiment which I had in view. This experiment had been in progress, when I left New Harmony on the 1st of June last, twenty-five months ; and, as the whole of my proceedings in America are full of interest to that portion of the public who prefer truth to error, and happiness to misery, I mean to publish a sketch of these transactions as soon as time can be obtained to admit me to complete it.

I further propose, at an early opportunity, to communicate to the public a more full developement of my general views.

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### MISCELLANEOUS.

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*The Assumption.*—On the 15th of August the fete of the Assumption of the Virgin was kept holy in Paris, and a grand procession, in which the royal family participated, called forth the inhabitants in thousands. A correspondent of the London Courier gives an interesting detail of the ceremonies, which he declares to have been “as a public spectacle of magnificence, a miserable failure, and as an act of national religion, a solemn humbug.” The annexed passage, in which the parts played by the royal family are noticed, is highly amusing :

To the Virgin succeeded a long batch of priests and monks, preceding the archbishop of Paris, in his gilt mitre, and archiepiscopal robes of silk and gold ; behind the archbishop marched, or rather lounged, the dauphin, bareheaded, in a blue military coat and jack boots, with a broad scarf of light blue silk (the cordon blue) strung across one shoulder. His royal highness moved forward with a careless listless gait, twirling his hat and feather, and looking as if he wished to be thought to smile at the humbug of the thing ; around him were a crowd of general officers, and young aids-de-camp, who showed by their chattering, and laughing, and winking at the girls in the windows, that they at least felt no great reverence for the solemnity. Next to the dauphin came his majesty Charles the Tenth, dressed like his son, with the exception of the jack boots, with his head uncovered, and hat in hand. On each side of his majesty walked several military officers and functionaries of state, who seemed to feel as much indifference to the ceremonial, as the attendants of the dauphin. After these marched, or rather stalked, the dauphiness, (duchess of Angouleme,) in a white dress, of most comprehensive latitude of flounce, a wide open bonnet, and towering plume of ostrich. Her royal highness moved and looked as if she felt that she was discharging a most important public duty, under circumstances of the most gratifying distinction. You might plainly discover in her haughty pace the pride of the princess—in her clasped hands, the enthusiasm of the devotee—and, in the wanderings of her eye, and the occasional adjustment of her dress, the inextinguishable vanity of the belle : not that she is very beautiful either, nothing more than a large full figure, and fair, strong featured face, indicating a tendency to passion, and a love of authority and command. Her royal highness was followed at some distance by three old ladies, who appeared heartily tired of the transaction from the very outset. But the most interesting part of the spectacle was the king—the

poor king—a mild and amiable looking gentleman, generally absorbed in a profound, but decent, respect for the ceremony in which his sense of religion induced him to appear, and often looking on the crowd with unforced smiles of placid benignity, and evidently anxious to receive, in return, some token of popular recognition and public attachment, but in vain ; the crowd, though of the lower order, the very mob proverbially the worshippers of the powers that be—*qui sape dat indignis honores*—the very rabble, on whom their monarch smiled with (I am sure) a sincere benevolence, looked at him in turn with an idle sort of general curiosity, an utter indifference, and a coldness of manner that indicated the existence of a stronger, but suppressed feeling ; not a shout was raised, not a *rave* heard, not a white flag, not a pocket handkerchief, waved in salutation to him through the entire day. I thought he seemed disappointed, even distressed, at the popular silence ; indeed I am sure he must have been, for his countenance had that expression of mind and temperament, that meekness of spirit, and feebleness of intellect, that delights in the affectionate aid of friendship, and the flattering applause of the people.

*St. Antony's Day in Lisbon.*—St. Antony is the patron of Lisbon, and the 13th of June, the anniversary of his death, is kept there with more punctuality, and more festivity and rejoicing, than any other holiday throughout the year. For weeks previous, the children in the streets erect altars to his memory, placing a little image of the saint on top, and begging of persons passing by a few reals for St. Antonio. On the evening of the 12th, an altar is erected for him in the Praça de S. Paola, with a temporary gallery at the one side, which is occupied by a regimental band, who continue playing airs almost without intermission for twenty-four hours ; the church bells at a certain hour strike up merry peals ; skyrockets are seen shooting up in all directions, and bonfires innumerable are blazing all over the city. It would, perhaps, be difficult to find another city in the world, where, on any occasion, such a number of bonfires are burning at once ; and if St. Anthony had performed no other miracle than this—purifying Lisbon, he would for that alone deserve immortality. The city has no such purification, from one end of the year to the other, not even from thunder storms and autumnal torrents, as it has on the night of the 12th of June. Great crowds of people are in the streets till a late hour, listening to the music, amusing themselves with fireworks, and speaking of St. Antonio. St. Antonio is in every one's mouth. "Who is this St. Antonio?" I said to a man who was extolling the magnificence of the scene. "Why, don't you know St. Antonio?" was the reply. "He is the patron of Lisbon ; he performed many miracles ; he keeps away the plague, and gets husbands to the raparigas (girls.) I have been in Samos, Cephalonia, Corfu, and Turkey—the plague is constantly there, but they have not St. Antonio?" I was about to mention another country, where they have neither the plague nor St. Antonio ; but, as it could serve no good purpose to unhinge his faith, even if that had been possible, I made no attempt to undeceive him. The raparigas, I understand, believe firmly in his miraculous power, and put up many a sincere prayer for his friendly intercession. The numbers, certainly, that frequented the churches on the 13th, were much greater than usual ; but

whether they were invoking St. Antonio, or the Virgin, none but themselves know. When their prayers are long in being heard, they make no scruple in treating him with great indignity. The common mode of revenge is, to put a cord round the neck of the image, which is to be had in every toy shop, plunge him into a well, and threaten to drown him outright, if he does not grant their request within a certain period.

*Mnemonics.*—Every time a certain artisan went to confess, he failed not to prepare himself for this act of devotion by beating his wife. "What barbarity! what cowardice!" said one of his neighbors to him, who had often been a hearer and spectator of this periodical broil. "Why do you beat a woman who, assuredly, is not worse than another? You are a scandal to the whole neighborhood!" "Neighbor," said the unfeeling husband, "I have my reasons for acting as I do, and when they are known to you I am sure you will approve of them. I have a very short memory, and do not recollect one fourth of my sins when I am on the point of going to confess, so that there remains for me but one way of remembering them, which is, to beat my wife, who then takes great care to recal them to my memory in the most glaring colors."

*Satan.*—If the deity, the God of the Christians, fills all space, where is there room for the devil, or Satan? If the designs of God be to save, and the designs of the devil be to counteract and destroy, how can these two opposites exist every where together? If it be true, as the scriptures say, that straight is the gate, and narrow the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it, then the power of the devil is vastly superior to the power of God, for he makes more victims than God can rescue.—*New Harmony Gazette.*

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